

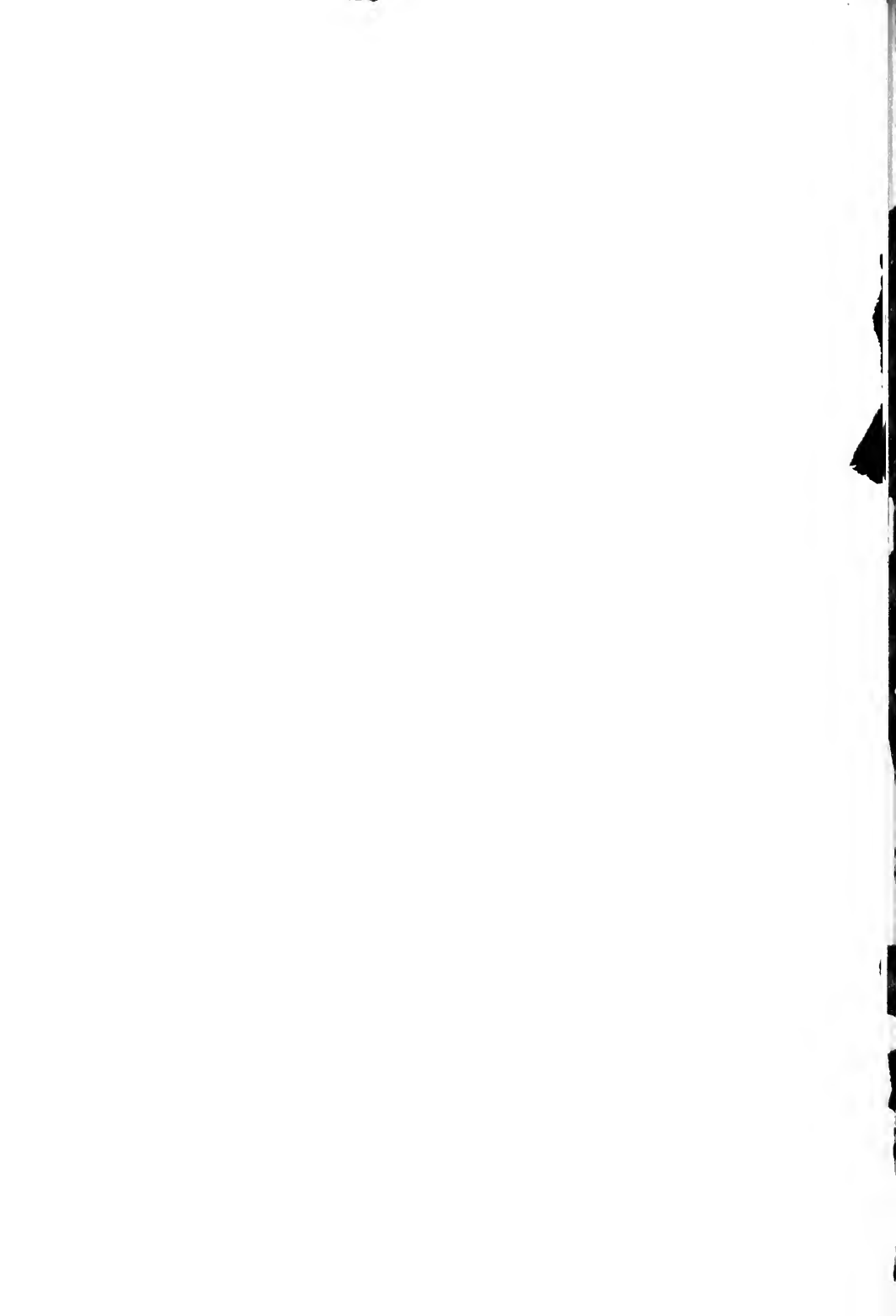
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A GROUP OF
ANCESTRAL DAMES
OF THE
COLONIAL PERIOD.

BY
MRS. KATE DEROSSET MEARIS

"In Domino Confido."

WASH BROS.,
BOOK AND COMMERCIAL PRINTERS,
GOLDSBORO, N. C.



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ii

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A Group of My Ancestral Dames

OF THE

Colonial Period.

AN HISTORICAL PAPER READ BEFORE THE N. C. SOCIETY
OF COLONIAL DAMES, BY MRS. KATE DEROSSET MEARES,
PRESIDENT, MARCH, 14, 1901.

*Members of the North Carolina Society of Colonial Dames,
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

The National Council of the Society of Colonial Dames of America, through its Committee on Colonial Study and Historical Research, has made it obligatory upon each State Society to use every effort to gather from private records and unpublished documents such data of the lives, manners, and customs of Colonial Ancestors as may enrich the historian's material or become the basis of interesting biography.

In accordance with this demand the Historical Circles of the North Carolina Dames will endeavor to furnish a series of papers, the initial number of which I am to offer you to-night. It consists of extracts from the unpublished "Annals of the DeRosser Family," put together primarily for the entertainment of the children of our own household. They make so simple a story that I could hardly have ventured to present it to you, but that it tells of some of the earliest settlers of the Cape Fear section, and so may not be wholly devoid of interest.

The gifted authoress (*a*) of a popular historic novel of the day quotes John Rolfe as prophesying thus: "Those who come after us will not look too curiously into the lineage of those to whom a nation owes its birth." From *our* point of view this sounds as though intended as an ironical thrust at that much-storied pioneer of old Virginia, whose descendants are as the sands of the sea for multitude; but, if the story be true, our John was indeed a false prophet, or, at best, a monumental example of a prophet without honor in his own country and among his own kindred; for the sons and daughters of his own Virginia are in no wise loath to seek ancestral

(a) "To Have and to Hold," by Mary Johnstone.

honors, and among them all, *who* are wont to claim the proudest pedigree, if not that noble host of descendants who sprang from his marriage with the Royal Princess Pocahontas! John Alden of those same olden times, is known to fame by the gentle hint of his piquante Priscilla that he *might* "speak for himself"—it might have added another feature to John Rolfe's historic cap, if his lady Rebekah had whispered him a kindly warning not to speak for her posterity.

The age in which we live is one of restless energy and eager rush to satisfy the needs of daily life, or to grasp its passing pleasures, and scant time has been spared for studying the annals of the past—but they who do not think it worth their while *sometimes* to give a thought to those to whom they owe their very being, are like him who, Shakespeare says, had no music in his soul. "The motions of their spirit are dull as Night and their affections dark as Erebus."

But inspired perhaps by love of country, or pride in our material prosperity and greatness, we seem at last to have wakened to the importance of recalling our ancestors, and from all sides comes the question "Who were they who laid the beginnings of so great a Nation?" Genealogical research has shown that long indifference and neglect have shadowed our National honor in that so many of the heroes (and heroines) of those early days lie in unknown graves—their very names forgotten or obliterated from history.

A primary duty of the distinguished Society to which we have the honor to belong, is to share the noble work of preserving ancient landmarks and relics, and of rescuing from oblivion the memory of our ancestors who bore their part in the founding and upbuilding of this Union of Sovereign States—especially of those of our own good Commonwealth. We surely cannot be content simply to trace our own genealogical lines but should contribute to National fame such records as we possess of noteworthy men and women of those olden times of which our own title is a perpetual reminder. It was *their* heroic virtues that made the wilderness they found to blossom as the rose, and to become a fair habitation for us who now enjoy its bountiful inheritance. Surely,

"Theirs were deeds which should not pass away
And names which must not wither."

So, as we enter upon a new century of our Country's history, let us each bring our sprig of "rosemary for remembrance," and pausing turn a backward glance down the long vista of past years, if perchance we may catch a glimpse of some of those of the long ago whose *names* at least may be familiar to us through oft-told tales of later generations. We will be surprised to find a most inviting field of retrospect and research ever widening before us. One by one, emerging from the dark mists of the past, they come before our mental vision until at last we see a stately procession of dames and sires—yet how diverse in appearance, how varied in nationality, for "God sifted many nations that He might bring good seed into this wilderness." The flash lights of legend and tradition illumine them with vivid reality, and they appear to us almost as living pictures. Imagination is tempted to weave around them many a romance of love and devotion, of chivalry and heroism, but our spirit of loyalty and affection glorifies them with interest far exceeding that of fiction, and impresses us with a feeling akin to reverent awe. Let us then portray them upon the walls of memory, that fixed there, they may abide with us in perpetual remembrance. * * * * *

I am to have the pleasure to-night of introducing to you a group of my own ancestral dames of the Colonial period—promising no dramatic narrative—nor thrilling tale of adventure—nor deeds of glory worthy of the historian's pen. My records are few and I do not mean to wander into fields of romance. Theirs is a simple story of duty nobly done, and trials bravely borne, and would not be worth the telling but that it may encourage others of you whose family archives, if searched into, may bring to light records of more general interest and greater historic value than mine.

But, though acknowledging my subject to be of purely personal interest, I utterly repudiate the charge of egotism, advanced as I am told by some hypereritic, who may not have learned the joy of "a worthy pride in worthy ancestry." I make no apology for my Dames, feeling sure that the half score or more of the N. C. Society, who with me claim lineal descent from them will be interested, while as many more of you, allied to them and us by ties of kindred scarce less

dear, may find more pleasure than they anticipate in making the acquaintance of these ladies of the olden time.

My story opens in the year 1671—for I may not ante-date the Colonial period—and the scene is in S. Eastern France. By a striking coincidence of time another ancestor of many of us in a far distant locality, is beginning to lay the foundations of a new country. Sir John Yeamans, a colonist of Barbadoes, had a few years before been Knighted by Charles II, (*b*)—appointed Landgrave and Governor of the County of Clarendon ("near Cape Fear") and commissioned to explore and plant a colony therein. With his Barbadian followers in the year 1665 he sailed into the Cape Fear, obtained a royal grant of an immense tract of land and established a settlement a few miles below the present site of Wilmington. Tempted however by strong inducements, he shortly left this settlement and afterwards went to South Carolina where, this very year, under the direction of his friend and patron Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper—Earl of Shaftesbury,—he was engaged in laying out the City of Charleston. (*c*) Later he became first governor of the Province of S. C. and it is believed he never returned to the Cape Fear. How strangely are the warp and woof of history woven in the mighty loom of Providence—as, witness ourselves, in whose veins flows mingled the blood of this English adventurer and of the Huguenot Lords of Languedoc—representatives of two great nations of the Old World. Can any one say why these *our* ancestors should not be as honorably numbered among the makers of our Nation as are the Pilgrim Fathers of New England—or Penn's Quakers, or the Cavaliers of Old Virginia and Maryland?

The ancestral home of the deRossets was in beautiful Provence—the land of the melodious Langue d'Oc,—the home of the troubadour and minstrel; of chivalry and romance; whose vine-clad heights and fragrant rose-gardens were types of its valiant Knights and lovely women; that land so beautiful that Greece in her palmyest days could boast no Colony so fair; where Roman legions *fought* bravely for possession;

(*b*) Sir John was Knighted by Charles II, in 1661 in recompense of services rendered to the House of Stuart by his father—who was High Sheriff of Bristol—in which cause his life was sacrificed.

(*c*) McCrady's "S. C. under the Proprietary government."—p. 162.

whose soil was trodden by myriad hosts of Crusaders, and enriched by the blood of Christian martyrdom and Huguenot persecution.

Let us go back some two hundred and thirty years and picture to ourselves a scene in its little City of Uzes—(Caesar's ancient Uctia.) It was the afternoon of February 10th, 1671. The soft blue sky of that sweet land and the balmy breezes of the Mediterranean seemed never so enchanting to the favored ones who wended their way to participate in an occasion of unusual interest to the social world. It was the wedding of two prominent members of society—the one a high-born beautiful woman, the other a military officer of noble birth and rank. The "so-called Church of the Reformed" (so called in the document) was packed with the elite of the City—many of whom were "followers of the New Religion." The land was at peace, for the Edict of Nantes still held good and as yet there was no rumble of that awful politico-religious upheaval which was shortly to shake the foundations of France, and banish from their homes "50,000 families of the best blood of the Kingdom." The Huguenot Priest in sacred vestments and strong in the sanctity of a pure and much-tried faith, stood before the altar waiting the coming of the bridal party.

The youthful Seigneur Louis de Rosset, (or deRonsay as he would call it) was an officer in the Regiment of Navarre in the service of Louis XIV. Descended from a long line of noble ancestry, "distinguished in the military annals of the kingdom from the days of the first Crusade," he was the son of "the noble Louis de Rosset, Doctor en Droits"—a man of letters, and of legal distinction. The bride was the Lady Gabrielle de Gondin, "grand-daughter and heiress of the late Antoine de Fontfroide, Treasurer of the King's domain in the Seneschaussee de Nimes." Fathers and grand-fathers had all passed away—but the ladies de Gondin and de Cassagnes were present, the latter playing the role of fairy god mother, in endowing her favorite grand-child with abundant worldly possessions. Official authority had sanctioned the marriage quaintly declaring it to be "ordained for the glory of God and for the increase of the human race." *

* The original marriage contract is in my possession.

The ceremony performed, the wedding bells rung merrily, as the gay party accompanied the young couple to their home, doubtless to "dance the happy hours away" in mirth and jollity, for those people of Provence were ever a merry, joyous race. The military attendants of the Captain added to the brilliancy of the scene, uniformed in all the pomp and bravery of war, and wearing many a well earned decoration and medal of honor—(for France had no more valued and loyal servants than her brave Huguenot soldiers.) The striking costumes of the Louis Quatorze period set off to advantage the stately grace and beauty of the ladies—their partners in the courtly dance. For four happy years the newly wedded pair kept honey moon in their baronial home of Perpignan, and then peace and happiness departed, for the clarion of war summoned the Captain again to his country's service in foreign lands and he was seldom at home any more, until at last the great catastrophe of the Revocation forced him into permanent exile. It is not for us to follow *his* subsequent career—his flight to Holland and service with William of Orange fighting in Ireland for the Protestant succession in Great Britain. The documents show that it was always honorable—that he was a naturalized citizen of England and died in London in 1725. Kindly influences enabled the Lady Gabrielle to dwell in peace at her own home for many years after his departure and tradition tells a pathetic story (well authenticated), of her sight being wept away through much sorrow and constant fear. In total blindness, waiting, with ever increasing hopelessness, the return of the long absent husband, hope at length sunk into despair, and when after near 20 years of separation he was restored to her, her soul still refused to be comforted, until at length the assurance of his identity was made plain to her and from excess of joy she fainted in his arms. (The story would not be complete without this conventional ending!)

Gabrielle cannot truly be called a Colonial Dame of *America* for she did not live to know this land of her children's adoption. But she belongs to the Colonial period—being an exiled waif she had no country of her own—and as the wife of the first deRosset, Huguenot refugee and the fore-mother of so many of us, I could not forbear relating all that is known of her personality—hoping that I have not pre-

somed too far upon your interest in the brief but touching story of her strangely checkered life.

It was her "only son"—Armand John deRosset I, who was the Huguenot immigrant to Carolina and founder of the American branch of the family. Educated first in "famous schools of England and Belgium," he finally entered the celebrated University of Basel, Switzerland, where in 1720 he was graduated with honor, and the degree of Doctor of Medicine. He married in Switzerland "a Lady of the noble House of Uectia," whose name is lost to us by the destruction of some of the family records—but we have reason to think it was Madeleine. As the diploma—still extant—tells us that he was also "of the same noble house of Uectia," they must have been kinsfolk and she, like himself, was probably a refugee from persecution. At some period of peace, they returned temporarily to France and two children, Gabrielle II and Louis Henry, were born to them in Montpellier before they finally bade adieu to their native land and went to England to join his old military father. While in London—in 1726—their third child was born—our ancestor Moses John deRosset I. It was probably in 1735 when the boy was about nine years old, that the Doctor, induced by circumstances unknown to us, set sail with his wife and their three children for these distant shores. Why did not tradition, or records, hand down to us the name of the ship on which that long and perilous voyage was made, and give us details of the trials they must have suffered? Such records do exist—notably a letter of a French Huguenot lady of S. C.—Judith Manigault. (*d*) That stands to me as an example of what those dear kinsfolk of ours may have endured. She tells of a ten weeks voyage on a wretched little vessel—with untold horrors of pestilence on board, and death at sea—of mutiny and famine—of storm and ship-wreck, and of dire poverty and hard labor after reaching port. It makes one shudder to think of all this and contrast it with the luxurious appointments, and safety of the modern Ocean-liner. Landing we know not where, our little family at length settled in the hamlet of New Liverpool—an insignificant village of perhaps 50 or 60 families—but incorporated in 1739 by Gov. Johnston

(*d*) Ramsey's History of S. C.

under the name of Wilmington in compliment to his friend and patron Spencer Compton—Earl of Wilmington.

The province of the Carolinas was fortunate—almost unique—in the character of its early settlers. Unlike those of other Colonial States, our records tell of no bands of needy adventurers—no outcasts of society—no cargoes of indentured convicts—nor ship loads of women in search of husbands. Many of the immigrants were ladies and gentlemen of education and social rank; many of these from the West Indian Colonies of Great Britain—people of means, seeking still better fortunes in the American El Dorado—with great grants of land and retinues of slaves and retainers, building substantial homes and making them famous far and near for good living and generous hospitality. Here too on the Cape Fear was the palace of the Royal Governors—around whose mimic court gathered all that was best of Provincial Society.

Under such unusual advantages of environment our Rose of Provence was transplanted to the sunny shores of Carolina, and Madeleine deRosset became one of the first Colonial Dames of the Cape Fear section. The white plume of Navarre under which our gallant fore-fathers had fought for God and the right, and the lilies of France, won for their shield by loyalty and valor, would henceforth be but sacred memories, but the trustful legend of their escutcheon, "In Domino Confido," none could take away—it would be theirs and their children's children's for guidance and strength in days of trial yet to come.

Only ten years had elapsed since the grand-sons of Sir John Yeamans (the Moore brothers) had come to the Cape Fear to reclaim the great possessions abandoned by their grand-father near 50 years before. They found the country in 1723 utterly without a white inhabitant. The population increased slowly in the towns. Brunswick (*c*) was the chief settlement and was surrounded by the extensive estates of wealthy planters.

Dr. de Rosset determined on coming farther up the river and fixed his residence in Wilmington on a lot on Second street between Market and Princess, where the old McRee

(c) "A Colonial Officer and His Times," by Col. A. M. Waddell —p. 209.

house now stands and where Wm. Hooper, the signer of the Declaration of Independence, afterwards lived. (*f*) How lonely and desolate, how crude and rough and comfortless must all have seemed to the daintily nurtured daughter of la belle France. Could we wonder if she had succumbed to the trials of her situation and pined in homesick longing for the luxuries of Old World civilization? But the brave Huguenot spirit had learned to endure hardship and to rise to the duties of life, and tradition represents her to us as always the refined and cultivated lady—the gentle and courteous friend—the kind and benevolent neighbor—the beloved and admired of all who knew her. She was also of exceeding beauty—her portrait was among the relics saved from the wreck of the Old French home, and was preserved for more than a century. I have been told by some who had seen it, that her beautiful features were reproduced in those of her lovely great grand-daughter, Polly Toomer. (It may be that some of *her* daughters now with us, may claim their aristocratic type of beauty as part of the inheritance of this fair French ancestress!)

The Doctor's profession was a busy one. A large laborious country practice took him much from home—while his wife was occupied with the varied household cares of domestic life in a new and undeveloped country, striving always for the welfare and happiness of those she loved so well.

She lived to see her husband an honored, useful citizen of the infant town—influential in its municipal councils—sitting in its courts as Judge of the quorum—successful in his noble healing art; and respected and esteemed by the whole community.

The eminent position of her elder son Louis must also have rejoiced her heart. Elected at an early age to the Provincial Assembly he was soon elevated to the King's Council, and "continued in that office for 25 years, until the end of the Royal Government."

The Colonial Records of N. C. bear ample testimony to the value of his services, in the untiring efforts to promote the welfare and best interest of *Church* as well as State—

(*f*) The unpretentious dwelling pictured in Lossing's Field Book as the home of Wm. Hooper, one of the N. C. "Signers," was in all probability the house originally built on the same lot by Dr. A. J. DeRosset

(for during their English sojourn the family had become devoted adherents of the Established Church.) Feeling conscientiously bound by his repeated oaths of office Mr. deRosset in the Revolution remained loyal to the Crown, was "banished from the Province on pain of death if he returned," and died in exile in London in 1786.

His wife was Margaret Walker (*g*). She died a year before him, in the grief and loneliness of enforced and prolonged separation. They left no children.

The only daughter of Dr. Armand John and Madeleine deRosset, Gabrielle H. married John DuBois and was also a Colonial Dame of N. Carolina—as was her daughter Magdalene (DuBois), Mrs. James Walker—but I leave it to *their* descendants of our Society to tell *their* story—and there is much interesting material concerning them waiting to engage the interest of some of their numerous daughters.

The younger son Moses John deRosset adopted the profession of his father—and was the second of five successive generations of Doctors deRosset, who for 175 years adorned the annals of the profession in North Carolina.

All too soon for the happiness of the family the sweet Huguenot mother fell asleep in 1746 and was laid to rest beneath the apple trees in her own home garden. There after many days the beloved husband of her youth was laid beside her, and there they still rest in peace, long since mouldered into dust, but ever waiting for the Day of Resurrection!

Dr. Armand was however to have another and far different experience of conjugal felicity before he followed her to the land of rest. About five years after her death he raised to the dignity of Colonial Dame a second Mrs. deRosset—choosing for that honor Elizabeth Catharine Bridgen (*h*) an Englishwoman of masterful mind and character—a striking contrast to the gentle lady of Uccia, her predecessor; yet a lady by birth, of fine literary attainments, and the intimate friend and neighbor of Mrs. John Burgwin—herself a native of Bristol, England. The Doctor survived this union but a few

(*g*) James and Margaret Walker were children of Robert and Ann Montgomery Walker—emigrated from Ireland in 1738. They were kinsmen perhaps, if not descendants of the "Fighting Bishop of Londonderry."

(*h*) Daughter of an Alderman of London, and sister of Edward Bridgen, whose commercial house carried on extensive trade with Carolina.

years and she then retired to her country seat "The Chinese Temple" adjoining the Hermitage, where during the Revolution she enjoyed many a "dish" of the forbidden tea, with which she seemed to have been bountifully supplied by "special permission of the authorities." She managed her handsome estate with ability and profit, and some clever extant letters tell of her doing the same for the Hermitage in Mr. Burgwin's absence. She died before the war was over at her summer home at Masonboro Sound in 1778, leaving no children to perpetuate her virtues, or to be interested in her memoirs, so we will dwell no longer on her.

With the garrulity of age I fear I have already spun out my story to the limit of your patience, but bear with me a little longer that I may introduce the last of my Dames, the first of English parentage.

About the middle of the 18th century there came to Wilmington from the island of Jamaica "an eminent lawyer," Marmaduke Jones by name. His wife had been "the widow of a Scotch gentleman of note in the plantations"—a Mr. Ivy—and with her two daughters Mary and Ann Ivy, constituted the family. These young ladies were heiresses in their own right, which, added to the attractions of well-educated and accomplished gentle women, could not fail to draw many admirers and suitors for their favor. Ann, the younger, married James Moore, son of the Maurice Moore who founded Brunswick, and afterwards a distinguished officer in the Continental line; and Mary, the elder sister, in 1759 became the wife of Dr. Moses John deRosset. He was then about 33 years of age—his early youth and manhood had been so full of adventure that had it been *his* instead of *her* story I was to tell, I might have given you a thrilling episode. I think he may have won his bride by "oft told tales of moving accidents by field and flood, of being captured by the inselent foe and sold to slavery" (for all this was indeed true) and moving her first to pity—love, so near akin, grew on apace.

He had been an officer in Col. Innes' Regt. sent in 1754 by North Carolina to aid her sister colony Virginia to repel the Indian and French Invasions. (These were the first troops raised by any Colony for service outside of its own borders.)

The Doctor built for his bride a brick house on the corner of two principal streets—Market and Second—adjoining his father's residence. The "Unlucky Corner," as it now appears makes it difficult for us to believe that it was in its day a handsome dwelling—perhaps the finest in the town—but, the fact that after 150 years it has outlived all others of its time, tells at least of honest material and workmanship. Alas! that all our old landmarks should fall into decay!

The oppressive measures of the British government were now beginning to stir the resentful opposition of the Colonies. Public meetings were held for devising means of relief and evading the unjust imposition of taxes. Committees of Safety were organized by the patriot party. Strong men were placed in positions of honor and trust and it was a striking evidence of the esteem and confidence of his fellow citizens, that Dr. deRosset, a peaceable practitioner of a quiet profession, should at such a critical time be elected to the office of Mayor of the town.

The story of resistance to the stamp act at the port of Brunswick by the people of the lower Cape Fear, is well known to us—though the *national* historian has been too apt to under-rate or ignore it. Unlike the far-famed Boston tea party, it was no midnight raid of a few men to destroy a cargo of tea—but eight years before that much vaunted epoch of United States history our men of N. C. rose in their might to assert their rights and liberties as British subjects—in broad daylight, in military array, under the King's own flag they defied the power of Great Britain—forced the Stamp Master to resign his office and hearing the representative of the British lion in his palatial den, successfully resisted the landing of the hated stamps from the King's own ships of war.

Wilmington did her part nobly—sent a contingent of troops—prohibited the transportation of supplies needed for the ships—and after all was over addressed a letter to Gov. Tryon protesting against any lack of loyalty to the Royal government, but asserting their right to resist oppression and closing with a sentence which McRee, our local historian says, is worthy of Hampden or Cobham. It runs thus, "Moderation ceases to be a virtue when the liberty of the British subject is in danger."

That letter was indited by Mayor deRosset as Chairman of the Council (*i*) and his descendants should remember it with pride—for it has North Carolina's first true ring of Liberty which culminated ten years later in the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, May 20th, 1775.

Our lady mayoress must have felt her heart beat proudly at her husband's honorable patriotic fulfillment of the responsibilities of his position. May we not picture her as one of that throng of men, women and children who met the boat of the stampship Diligence as it approached the town mounted on a cart, and in jubliant procession paraded the trophy of victory through the streets. And then at night when that memorable day closed with a general illumination of the town we may be sure the Mayor's house was conspicuously ablaze, and the young wife felt happy and proud in the consciousness that her husband was indeed a hero!

But their married life, beginning so auspiciously was brief—lasting only eight years. On Christmas day 1767 Dr. de Rosset was cut down in the prime of life and was buried two days later on his 41st birthday—the only known male deRosset down to the present generation who did not live to a ripe old age. Only two children blessed their union—my grand-father Dr. Armand John deRosset II, who was only six weeks old when he was left fatherless, and his sister Magdalen Mary—five years his senior—who married Mr. Henry Toomer, and has several representatives in our Society who might well employ their clever pens in recording for our imitation the “unparalleled virtues” for which the family papers say she was distinguished.

Thus early inured to sorrow Mary Ivy henceforth devoted herself to the rearing and education of her children—for this she was eminently fitted by her early opportunities for intellectual culture. Always a student of such literature as the times afforded, her mind was open to grasp the problems of science as well as to enjoy lighter literature. She was from the first interested in her husband's professional pursuits and under his instructions became so expert that he could, in his absence, safely entrust his patients to her care, and also the use of the surgical instruments. So when his

(i) McRee's Memoirs of Dr. A. J. DeRosset.

death left the town ill-supplied with competent physicians she was ever ready to respond to calls—especially of the sick poor—taking constantly not only the physician's work but that of trained nurse—little dreaming that her labor of love and charity would develop into one of the noblest professions of the women of the next century. In climatic fevers she was very successful and also in inoculation for small-pox—vaccination being yet unknown. It was doubtless from her lancet that her son received the virus that protected him from the dreaded scourge he so often had to deal with in his long life. It was also to his Mother's surgical skill that he owed the setting and cure of a broken collar bone in his boyhood.

The clouds of war grew more and more threatening and the end of the Colonial period drew near. Lonely and unprotected was the little family, and Mrs. deRosset felt that for her children's sake it would be well for her to accept an offer of marriage from Mr. Adam Boyd. He was then the editor of the Cape Fear *Mercury*—the patriot organ—and an accomplished scholar and gentleman. Mr. Boyd took a paternal interest in the children and gave valuable assistance in their education, until he was called into military service. After the war he was active in the organization of the North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati—was its secretary, and after his ordination by Bishop Seabury to the Episcopal ministry, was made its Brigade Chaplain. Mrs. deRosset's prenuptial contract is on file in the New Hanover Court House, and according to the custom of the time, gives an inventory of her various possessions—articles of household furniture, silver-ware, servants, &c.

Some of us may from our own experience in a measure realize the anxiety and distress of the mother and her children during the long years of the Revolutionary war. At times they were forced to the refuge of her sister's (Mrs. Gen. Moore's) home on the North-East. Once Mrs. Moore's house was bombarded by a British sloop of war, under suspicion of being a harbor for disaffected patriots.

Together they witnessed the cruel treatment of Cornelius Harnett, the popular idol of the Cape Fear, when, taken from a sick bed in Onslow County by Craig's marauders, he fell from exhaustion on the march, and was thrown across a horse's back "like a sack of meal," and thus brought into Wil-

mington, where he died in prison— a lamented victim of an unholy war. Such scenes had an enduring influence upon the lad Armand, filling his soul with the spirit of pure patriotism— so that we are hardly surprised to find him when only 13 years old shouldering his musket and, joining the patriot forces, participating in a gallant fight at the Oaks. Lossing in his Field Book of the American Revolution says that “the venerable Doctor” seventy years later related to him the interesting incident, adding “it is worthy of attention and the local historian should not fail to put it upon record!”

When at last victory was won and peace brooded “over the land of the free and the home of the brave,” though families were broken and fortunes ruined, all hearts rejoiced at the birth of the “Young Republic.” Thenceforth Mrs. Boyd’s home was with her daughter, Mrs. Toomer— dutifully attended by the loving care of that devoted child her last years were passed in peace, though sorely tried by total blindness. (Wonderful it is that sorrow and trouble so often put out the light of those windows of the soul!) She lived to see her beloved son Armand happily married and launched on his remarkable professional career of seventy years of active practice, and in 1798 soon after *his* first-born son came to perpetuate her husband’s name, she passed in the odor of sanctity into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. To his dying-day my grand-father could not speak of his “venerated mother,” as he always called her, but with subdued and reverent tone as of one mourning the recent departure of the best beloved.

As I forewarned you these ancestors of mine left no *glorious* deed to be recorded on the pages of the Nation’s history, but none the less they were among the strong foundation stones of integrity and uprightness, of social law and order, on which the great fabric of Christian civilization rests, and they

“Were not of those who stoop and lie in wait
For place or fortune, or for worldly state;
Their powers shed round them in the daily strife
And mild concerns of ordinary life”

The gracious influence of blameless lives and kindly hearts,
and duty nobly done!





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